

Message Text

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USICA

USINFO FOR PGM/PPE

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: SECDEF BROWN'S PRESS CONFERENCE IN OSLO, NORWAY 4/12/78

FOLLOWING IS A FULL TRANSCRIPT OF SECRETARY BROWN'S
PRESS CONFERENCE HELD IN OSLO AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF
THE NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AT 1615 HRS ON
APRIL 12.

QUESTION: SIR, WHY DID YOU GO DIRECTLY UP TO NORTHERN NORWAY?

SECDEF: I FLEW OVERNIGHT FROM THE UNITED STATES AND BY GOING
DIRECTLY TO NORTHERN NORWAY RATHER THAN COMING
TO OSLO AND THEN GOING UP TO NORTHERN NORWAY AND
COMING DOWN AGAIN, I SAVED ABOUT 2 OR 3 HOURS. WHY I
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WENT TO NORTHERN NORWAY WAS THAT WE CONSIDERED THAT AREA
TO BE AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT ONE FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF
THE DEFENSE OF THE ALLIANCE. AND I WANTED TO SEE FIRST-
HAND FOR MYSELF AS WELL AS ONE CAN IN JUST A FEW HOURS, WHAT
KINDS OF FORCES THERE WERE THERE, ARE THERE, AND
WHAT THE PROBLEMS OF REINFORCEMENT AND A FORWARD STRATEGY
ARE IN THAT AREA.

QUESTION: WHAT'S YOUR IMPRESSION?

SECDEF: AGAIN, LIMITED BY THE FACT THAT I WAS THERE FOR ONLY A FEW HOURS, MY IMPRESSION IS THAT THE NORWEGIAN FORCES THERE OPERATE WELL ON COMBINED OPERATIONS, I SAW ARMY, NAVY AND AIR FORCE UNITS; THAT THEY ARE WELL-EQUIPPED, WELL-TRAINED, THAT IN VIEW OF THE POSSIBLE THREATS, REINFORCEMENT IS A VERY IMPORTANT PART OF ANY DEFENSE PLAN IN THAT REGION.

QUESTION: MR. SECRETARY, ACCORDING TO THE NEW YORK TIMES YOU HAVE RECEIVED TWO PRO MEMORIA FROM THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY ABOUT THE PLANNED LIMITATION OF THE DIFFERENT TASKS WHICH ALSO WILL... THERE IS A CONCERN THAT THE DEFENSE OF NORTHERN NORWAY MIGHT BE WEAKENED BY...

SECDEF: YES, THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY WAS RESPONDING TO A DRAFT MEMORANDUM WHICH WENT OUT TO THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR COMMENT EARLY THIS YEAR. IN A COVER LETTER TO THAT DRAFT, I INDICATED VERY CLEARLY, BUT APPARENTLY NOT SO CLEARLY THAT IT WAS REFLECTED IN ANY OF THE REPORTS, THAT THERE WERE NO DECISIONS WHATEVER CONTAINED IN THAT DRAFT, THAT IT DID NOT REPRESENT ANY DECISIONS, THAT IT REPRESENTED A SERIES OF TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION. THE NAVY, OUT OF A PROPER CONCERN FOR THE SIZE OF ITS OWN FORCE STRUCTURE, RESPONDED WITH AN INTERPRETATION THAT THAT FORCE STRUCTURE, UNCLASSIFIED

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OR FORCE STRUCTURE THAT THEY WERE WORRIED WOULD BE IMPOSED ON, AS A LIMIT, ON THEM, WOULD BE INADQUATE TO CARRY OUT A CERTAIN STRATEGY. SUBSEQUENT DRAFTS OF THIS GUIDANCE, HAVE, I THINK, CLARIFIED WHAT THE U.S. STRATEGY IS IN THIS REGARD, AND MY STATEMENTS TO THE CONGRESS AS RECENTLY AS YESTERDAY ALSO HAVE CLARIFIED THAT STRATEGY. IT IS THAT THE U.S. NAVY WILL CONTINUE TO PLAN AND CONTINUE TO HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO OPERATE IN AREAS OF RELATIVELY HIGH THREAT, SUCH AS THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN FLANKS OF NATO. AND BY THE NORTHERN FLANK OF NATO, WE SPECIFICALLY MEAN THE NORWEGIAN SEA. THAT IS A RELATIVELY HIGH THREAT AREA, BUT IT IS NOT BY ANY MEANS THE HIGHEST THREAT AREA THAT ONE MIGHT CONCEIVE OF SENDING THE U.S. NAVY INTO. THERE ARE STILL HIGHER THREAT AREAS CLOSER TO SOVIET CONCENTRATIONS OF NAVAL FORCES AND LAND-BASED AIR. THERE IS, OF COURSE, A SPECTRUM OF SITUATIONS, IN TERMS OF GEOGRAPHY, IN TERMS OF THREAT LEVEL FROM OPPOSING NAVAL FORCES AND OPPOSING LAND-BASED AIR FORCES, AND THERE IS ALSO A SPECTRUM OF SITUATIONS AS TO TIMING, AS TO WHEN SUCH ATTACKS WOULD BE MADE, OF WHEN SUCH CONFLICTS WOULD TAKE PLACE DURING THE COURSE OF A WAR. DEPENDING UPON WHAT SIZE FORCES THE U.S. AND ITS ALLIED DISPOSE OF, AND ON JUDGEMENTS, INDIVIDUAL JUDGMENTS, THE RISK OF SUCH ENGAGEMENTS WILL BE GREATER OR LESS. THE U.S. STRATEGY

IS THAT WE HAVE ENOUGH FORCES, AND WILL HAVE ENOUGH FORCES,
TO GO INTO AREAS OF HIGH RISK AND PREVAIL. AND BY HIGH RISK
WE MEAN THE NORWEGIAN SEA.

QUESTION: MR. SECRETARY, YOU ARE OF COURSE AWARE THAT THERE ARE
SOME UNSOLVED PROBLEMS, BOUNDARY PROBLEMS, BETWEEN THE SOVIET
UNION AND NORWAY UP NORTH. DURING... IS THAT QUESTION OF CONCERN
TO THE UNITED STATES AND TO THE ALLIANCE AS A WHOLE?

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SECDEF: AS REGARDS THESE PROBLEMS, AND THERE ARE A VARIETY OF THEM,
CERTAINLY THE ECONOMIC ONES, FISHING RIGHTS AND SO ON,
ARE MATTERS OF BILATERAL INTEREST BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION
AND NORWAY, AND WE WOULD NOT PRESUME TO TELL THE NORWEGIAN
GOVERNMENT HOW TO BEHAVE IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES.
NATURALLY, WE WANT TO BE SUPPORTIVE OF NORWAY IN ANY WAY THAT
NORWAY THINKS HELPFUL. AS TO LONGER RANGE STRATEGIC AND MILITARY
IMPLICATIONS, ANY SITUATION THAT REGARDS THOSE, OF COURSE, WE
WOULD FIND OF INTEREST, BUT I DON'T... I'M NOT PREPARED TO SAY AND
MY GOVERNMENT IS NOT PREPARED TO SAY, WITHOUT LOOKING AT SPECIFIC
MATTERS WHETHER THOSE ARE INVOLVED OR NOT. IT'S UP TO NORWAY IN
THE FIRST INSTANCE TO MAKE THESE DECISIONS.

QUESTION: DOES THIS MEAN THAT YOU HAVE NO CONCERN ABOUT THE AGREE-
MENT WITH THE SOVIET UNION? THE GREY ZONE AGREEMENT, AS
WE...
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SECDEF: WELL, THE GREY ZONE AGREEMENT I WOULD PUT INTO THE AREA
OF SOVIET-NORWEGIAN RELATIONS, INsofar AS IT IS AN ECONOMIC
MATTER. AND THAT, IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, IS WHAT IT IS.

QUESTION: IF I MAY TURN YOUR ATTENTION TO PROBLEMS OUTSIDE
THE NORWEGIAN AREA, I... YOU KNOW THERE HAVE BEEN STRONG
REACTIONS IN SOME EUROPEAN COUNTRIES TO THE DECISION NOT TO
GO AHEAD WITH THE PRODUCTION OF THE NEUTRON BOMB. DO YOU SHARE
THESE CONCERNS THAT HAVE BEEN EXPRESSED?

SECDEF: WELL, I CLEARLY CAN'T SHARE ALL THE REACTIONS, BECAUSE
THE REACTIONS ARE DIVERSE AND IN SOME CASES CONTRADICTIONARY.
I BELIEVE THAT THE DECISION THAT THE PRESIDENT MADE TO POST-
PONE THE DECISION ON PRODUCTION OF ENHANCED RADIATION/REDUCED
BLAST WEAPONS, NUCLEAR WEAPONS, DECISIONS OF THE UNITED STATES
AND THE ALLIANCE QUITE WELL FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF THE
SUBJECT. IT MAKES IT CLEAR THAT A MAJOR INFLUENCE ON THE FUTURE
DECISION, ON THE FINAL DECISION, WHICH WOULD BE TAKEN SOME
TIME IN THE FUTURE, IS SOVIET BEHAVIOR IN TERMS OF ITS FORCES
AND ITS ACTIONS THAT AFFECT EUROPEAN SECURITY. SINCE
THE ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPON IS A USEFUL MILITARY COUNTER TO
SOVIET THREATS OF, OR ACTION IN, A MILITARY SITUATION, SPE-
CIFICALLY, FOR EXAMPLE, MASS TANK ATTACKS. WE'LL BE LOOKING
AT WHAT THE SOVIETS OFFER, OR WHAT THEY DO, IN THESE FORCE
DECISIONS, AND OTHER ACTIONS RELATED TO EUROPEAN SECURITY.
AT THE SAME TIME, WE ARE GOING AHEAD WITH MODERNIZATION OF OUR
THEATER NUCLEAR FORCES, SPECIFICALLY PRODUCING SOME NEW DESIGNS
OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS, OVER THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO, THAT WILL V
REPLACE OLDER, OBSOLETE ONES. THESE WILL NOT CONTAIN AN
ENHANCED RADIATION CAPABILITY, BUT THEY WILL BE SUCH THAT AT
LEAST IN SOME CASES, SUCH A CAPABILITY COULD BE ADDED RELATIVELY
QUICKLY, IF A DECISION IS MADE TO DO SO. NOW I THINK THAT'S
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A REASONABLY GOOD WAY TO COME OUT ON THIS PROBLEM, AND I
THINK IT POSITIONS US WELL, AND I THINK THAT LOOKING AT THAT
DECISION, THAT OUTCOME, IT WILL HAVE, AND APPEARS TO ME
TO HAVE, WIDESPREAD SUPPORT IN THE ALLIANCE, ALTHOUGH AS I
SAID, THERE IS A SPECTRUM OF VIEWS IN THE ALLIANCE.

QUESTION: TO TALK OF THE NORTHERN FLANK AGAIN, WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MAIN PROBLEM IN THE YEARS TO COME ON THE NORTHERN FLANK?

SECDEF: IN THE NORTHERN FLANK. I THINK THAT THE MAIN PROBLEM IS THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE, AND WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE, IMMEDIATELY IN THE AREA, OR NEAR THE AREA, A COMBINATION OF GROUND FORCES, AIR FORCES, INCLUDING LAND-BASED NAVAL AIR, AND NAVAL FORCES, BOTH SHIPS AND AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, THAT WILL BE SUBSTANTIALLY LARGER THAN THE FORCES THAT NATO CAN KEEP IN THE AREA ALL THE TIME. IT'S A MATTER OF GEOGRAPHY AND RELATIVE SIZE. THAT MEANS THAT IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A FORWARD STRATEGY WE HAVE TO BE ABLE TO REINFORCE VERY RAPIDLY ON RELATIVELY SHORT WARNING, AND TO DO SO WITH ALL KINDS OF FORCES. AIR FORCES ARE PERHAPS AS IMPORTANT AS ANY BECAUSE THEY CAN BE GOTTEN THERE QUICKLY, AND THEY TEND TO HAVE A BIG EFFECT IN THE EARLY PARTS OF ANY SUCH ENGAGEMENT. BUT GROUND AND SEA FORCES ARE VERY IMPORTANT AS WELL. WE CAN MOVE PEOPLE VERY QUICKLY, WE CAN MOVE AIRCRAFT VERY QUICKLY. SHIPS AND HEAVY EQUIPMENT BOTH TAKE SOMEWHAT LONGER. OTHER MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE, AND NORWAY, TOO--NORWAY FIRST OF ALL HAVE PLANS TO REINFORCE THAT NORTHERN REGION QUICKLY, BUT I THINK THOSE PLANS HAVE TO BE ENHANCED. IN A WAY, THIS IS NOT VERY DIFFERENT FROM A SITUATION ON THE CENTRAL FRONT, WHERE AGAIN THE ALLIANCE STARTS OUT WITH AN ADVERSE RATIO OF ARMOR, NOT OF AIRCRAFT PARTICULARLY, BUT OF ARTILLERY, AND EVEN SOMEWHAT OF TROOPS. AND THE NEED IS TO BE ABLE ON SHORT NOTICE, WITHIN A WEEK SAY, RATHER THAN WITHIN A MONTH, TO REDRESS THAT RATIO QUICKLY. THAT I SEE AS THE PRINCIPAL PROBLEM.

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QUESTION: I WOULD LIKE TO THINK THERE IS COMMENT UPON
THE NORWEGIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY'S CLEAR AND DOUBTLESS (REJECTION)
OF ANY PRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEUTRON BOMB OF
PRESIDENT CARTER.

SECDEF: THIS IS ONE THAT I WILL ONLY ANSWER PART OF; I THINK
I WILL, ASK THE NORWEGIAN DEFENSE MINISTER TO RESPOND AS WELL.
NORWAY, OF COURSE, HAS AND CONTINUES TO HAVE, THE DOCTRINE,
THE POLICY THAT IT WANTS NO NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON ITS TERRITORY
DURING PEACE TIME, NOR FOREIGN TROOPS STATIONED ON ITS TERR-
ITORY IN PEACE TIME. IN TERMS OF DEPLOYMENT THEN, THIS IS NOT
A CHANGE. THE UNITED STATES, AS I HAVE DESCRIBED ITS DECISION,
WILL NOT BE PRODUCING THE ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPON WITHOUT
A DECISION THAT HAS NOT YET BEEN MADE. SO FAR AS DEVELOPMENT
IS CONCERNED, THE DEVELOPMENT WAS DONE BEFORE THIS BECAME
AN ISSUE OF GREAT NATIONAL ATTENTION, OR INTERNATIONAL ATTEN-
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TION. AND I KNOW OF NO WAY TO UN-DEVELOP IT.
NORWEGIAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE ROLF HANSEN SAID THE FOLLOWING:
WELL, I DON'T THINK IT'S VERY MUCH TO ADD TO THIS QUESTION.
THE U.S. GOVERNMENT ASKED THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT WHAT ABOUT
OUR ATTITUDE TO THE NEUTRON BOMB, PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT,
AND SO ON. AND AS YOU ALL KNOW, THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT
AND THE NORWEGIAN PARLIAMENT UNDERLINE VERY MUCH, VERY STRONG-
LY, THAT THIS HAS TO BE FIRSTLY A QUESTION ABOUT HOW IT RE-
FLECTS ON THE DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATIONS. AND BY
PRESIDENT CARTER'S DECISION, I THINK NOW THAT THE PRESSURE
IS ON THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT. WHAT THEY ARE GOING TO DO IS VERY
DECISIVE ON THIS QUESTION IN THE TIME TO COME. AND I THINK
THAT IS A VERY INTERESTING SITUATION.

QUESTION: MAY I ASK, TO PUT IT BLUNTLY, DO YOU REALLY EXPECT
THE SOVIET UNION TO ACCEPT THE NEUTRON BOMB AS A PART OF A
BARGAIN AFTER MR. BREZHNEV'S REJECTION OF HIS LAST SPEECH IN

VLADIVOSTOK?

SECDEF: I DON'T KNOW. THE SOVIET UNION, OF COURSE, PREFERS TO HAVE, I ASSUME, SITUATIONS COME OUT THAT THEY DON'T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING IN ORDER TO PREVENT THE PRODUCTION, AND THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPON. THEY HAVE OFFERED NOT TO PRODUCE IT THEMSELVES, WHICH IS A MEANINGLESS PROPOSAL ON TWO COUNTS: FIRST, THAT IT IS COMPLETELY UNVERIFIABLE. WE HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING THAT THEY DON'T HAVE ONE RIGHT NOW, RIGHT THIS MINUTE. THAT WE DON'T KNOW, OF COURSE, PREVENTS PUBLIC PROTESTS AGAINST THE SOVIETS' HAVING IT, AND CALLS ON THEM TO RENOUNCE IT. BUT IT DOESN'T PROVIDE US WITH ANY REASSURANCE THAT THEY DON'T HAVE IT. SECOND, IT'S NOT A PARTICULARLY USEFUL WEAPON TO A COUNTRY THAT IS PLANNING TO, EXCEPT TO AN ALLIANCE OR A GROUP OF COUNTRIES THAT EXPECTS A LARGE-SCALE TANK ATTACK ACROSS ITS BORDER. AND I DON'T

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THINK THE SOVIET UNION FALLS IN THAT CATEGORY. AS A CONSEQUENCE, THAT PARTICULAR OFFER, AS I SAY, IS NOT A MEANINGFUL ONE. WHETHER THEY ARE PREPARED TO MAKE A MEANINGFUL MOVE, I SIMPLY DON'T KNOW. WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE.

QUESTION: MR. SECRETARY, IF THE DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN TO PRODUCE THE ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPON, WOULD YOU STILL HAVE STARTED THE PROGRAM TO MODERNIZE YOUR THEATER NUCLEAR WEAPONS?

SECDEF: YES, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN PART OF THAT PROGRAM. SO THAT WHAT WE'RE DOING IS MODERNIZING IN ANY EVENT, MODERNIZING WITHOUT THAT FEATURE FOR THE TIME BEING, BUT ARRANGING SO THAT WE CAN INCORPORATE IT IN RATHER RAPIDLY IF SUCH A DECISION IS TAKEN.

QUESTION: MR. SECRETARY, HAVE YOU GOT ANY BRIEFING ON THE DOCUMENT PRODUCED BY THE NORWEGIAN NATIONAL DEFENSE COMMISSION? HAVE YOU GOT ANY INFORMATION ON THAT DOCUMENT?

SECDEF: I DON'T KNOW WHETHER IT'S A PUBLIC DOCUMENT- IS IT A PUBLIC DOCUMENT? WELL, THEN I CAN SPEAK TO WHAT I KNOW OF IT, WHICH IS THAT, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, IT CALLS OVER THE NEXT 15 YEARS FOR AN AVERAGE INCREASE ANNUALLY IN REAL TERMS FOR DEFENSE EXPENDITURES OF 3 PERCENT A YEAR. RATHER MORE AT THE BEGINNING, RATHER LESS AT THE END. IT IS, OF COURSE, FOR THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT TO DECIDE HOW IT WANTS TO RESPOND TO THAT PROPOSAL OF THE COMMISSION. BUT I CAN SAY THAT ITS RECOMMENDATIONS CORRESPOND RATHER CLOSELY TO THE COMMITMENT TAKEN BY THE DEFENSE MINISTERS LAST YEAR AT THE NATO DEFENSE PLANNING COMMITTEE TO INCREASE BY AN AVERAGE OF 3 PERCENT OVER THE COMING YEARS- I THINK WE WERE TALKING ABOUT A SHORTER RANGE OF YEARS. BECAUSE FIFTEEN YEARS IS A LONG TIME TO

MAKE A COMMITMENT OF 3 PERCENT A YEAR. AND IN THAT SENSE,
IT IS CERTAINLY IN AGREEMENT WITH WHAT THE MINISTERS HAVE
SAID.

NORWEGIAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE ROLF HANSEN SAID THE FOLLOWING:
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WELL, LET ME SAY THAT WE DO INTEND, OF COURSE, TO INFORM
ALL OUR NATO ALLIES ABOUT THE DEFENSE COMMISSION, ITS WORK
AND PROPOSALS. AND WITHIN A FEW DAYS, I THINK, WE WILL
HAVE AN ENGLISH VERSION... IN ORDER TO DO THIS... INFORMATION
I THINK IT WILL BE READY VERY SOON.

SECDEF: THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
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